

SOCIAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

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SOCIAL SECURITY BOARD REPORTS ON 890,000 CASES

The Social Security Board reported 890,000 cases of federal-state aid to the needy aged, needy blind and dependent children handled in the period November 1, 1936 -- June 30, 1937.

During the period old-age assistance was extended to 469,000 persons, of whom 100,000 were entirely without other sources of income. About 90,000 had a slight income from wages, rents or pensions, but not enough to disqualify them for the grants. Of the total number 333,000 lived in homes where no public aid was received. About 100,000 lived in homes where another member of the family also received old-age assistance. The Board lists three important facts revealed by the figures: widespread lack of income, the high proportion of cases in which federal-state old age assistance is the only source of public aid being granted, and the significant extent to which federal-state old age assistance is taking over obligations formerly borne by other agencies. The average grant for old persons living alone was \$20 per month and \$17 for those living with relatives.

Aid was extended to 163,300 dependent children, of whom 142,000 were white and 19,000 colored. In an overwhelming number of cases dependency was the result of disruption of the family, for which death was the most frequent cause. The median payment received was about \$20 per month.

Aid was given to 9,400 needy blind, of whom more than one-third were past 65. Of 100,000 between 16 and 45 to whom aid was given, only 125 were employed. Less than 10,000 were receiving any form of education. Monthly payments ranged from \$1 to \$84, half being less than \$21 and one-fourth less than \$30.

IS PAPAL POLICY CHANGING?

That the Vatican is coming to the conclusion that it was too hasty in making terms with the dictators and that a more friendly understanding with communists and other liberals is within the realm of possibility, is the gist of an article entitled "Has the Pope Joined the Front Populaire?" in the February 1938 issue of Common Sense, written by its European correspondent, W. W. Riley.

Improbable as it may seem in the light of historic papal policy, Mr. Riley presents some strong evidence to support his hypothesis. The Pope has been greatly disturbed by the massacre of Basque Catholics by Franco, by Hitler's persecution of German Catholics, and by the increasing economic difficulties of the dictators. Also, he has been under increasing pressure from liberal Catholic opinion in France and the United States, Cardinal Mundelein's irate denunciation of Hitler had reverberations throughout the entire Catholic church. Leon Blum suppressed the Royalist Croix de Feu (Cross of Fire) and now its leader, Colonel de la Rocque is revealed as having been subsidized by government funds by Tardieu, Rightist premier. Premature discovery of the plot of Les Cagoulauds (The Hooded Ones) to overthrow the government and capture of their hidden arms has further served to demoralize the reactionary groups in France and to strengthen the liberals. Thus, it is believed, the Pope is being led by painful stages to the conclusion that he blundered in committing the Church to the fortunes of the fascist dictators. Credence is given to these suppositions by Mussolini's recent outburst against 'vacillating Christians', with whom he threatens to settle one day.

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According to this writer, the Pope's away from fascism will probably the line of receding somewhat from strong anti-Communist stand which Vatican has heretofore held and of getting Catholics to work hand-in-with liberals for certain object-providing guarantees are given religious liberty will be protect-As if to corroborate this state-

French Communists have recently ed a policy of "A more friendly to Catholics". The Christmas mes- of Cardinal Verdier, liberal arch- op of Paris, is interpreted as a uite, if veiled, offer of a change tholic policy toward Communists in n for such guarantees of religious om. Already the Right wing of the h has raised its protest through Archbishop of Lyons. However, the s solemn denunciation of the Third a in his Christmas address to the ege of Cardinals is regarded as ing perfectly into the picture ed by Cardinal Verdier. The Pope's aration "...our warning (to Germany e the world could not be more sol- er explicit" is interpreted as a r threat of possible change in Ro- Catholic policy toward authoritar- states.

t the opening of the Congress of French Communist party on December Maurice Thomez replied to Cardinal tier, declaring the Catholic workers Communist workers can collaborate the protection of both and in or- zing the struggle against fascism, asserting that while Communists remain secular and atheistic, no gious discussion should be permit- between themselves and the Catholic ers.

he utterances of both groups are l sufficiently vague to leave each o pursue whatever line of action lopments may hereafter dictate, but Riley declares that only a recon- ation between Hitler and the Pope sudden swing of the Communists to revolutionary Marxism can pre- the consummation of this under- ding.

* * *

Plans for the Disciple Conference Social Action - May 3, 4, 1938 - at ana University are progressing. A- the leaders will be: Howard Kester F. Ernest Johnson, and Dr. Roswell arnes.

39,700 TRAFFIC DEATH TOLL IN 1937

Traffic deaths in the United States reached a new high figure in 1937 with 39,700 fatal street accidents, the National Safety Council revealed on February 1. This represents a four per- cent increase over 1936, when 38,089 were killed, according to revised fig- ures. That the death toll for 1937 was not larger is due to the fact that the months of November and December record- ed sharp decreases over the preceding months. The total number of injured was 9,775,000, of whom 375,000 were listed as permanently disabled. The Council placed the total monetary cost of the nation's accident bill at \$3,700,000,- 000, distributed as follows: loss in wages and cost of medical service, \$2- 550,000,000, property damage in traffic mishaps, \$870,000,000, fire losses in accidents, \$280,000,000. One encourag- ing factor in the situation is the 15% decline in the number of fatal accidents to children under 15 years of age from 16,200 in 1936 to 15,000 in 1937. There was also a slightly favorable trend discernible in the ratio of fatal acci- dents to automobile mileage. The 1937 fatality rate was 15.9 per 100,000,000 miles of travel, as against a rate of 16.6 in 1936. On the other hand, the fatality rate per 100,000 population (a more accurate index to the actual hazards run by individuals in traffic) rose from 29.7 in 1936 to 30.7 in 1937.

Press dispatches carrying the figures of the Council's preliminary report make no mention of the liquor factor in traf- fic fatalities. Reports in past years have placed the number of liquor-caused traffic fatalities at about six to eight per cent. The National Safety Council has followed the custom of at- tributing accidents to such causes as 'bad driving practices', 'driving on wrong side of the road', 'failure to grant right-of-way', 'running off the road', etc., any one of which may have been caused by lack of control of self and care due to drink. Dr. Heisey of Minneapolis, from his study of fatal accidents occurring at and near Union- town, Pa., estimates that 75 per cent of all fatal traffic accidents are due to drink.

* * *

Is your state legislature meeting this year? Has it ratified the Child Labor Amendment? Write your represent- ative concerning the matter.



WAGES, HOURS AND ESTIMATED ANNUAL WAGES IN INDUSTRY

in February 1937

From Monthly Labor Review, Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., May, 1937

	<u>Av. hourly</u> <u>wages</u> <u>cents</u>	<u>Av. weekly</u> <u>wages</u>	<u>Av. hours</u> <u>per week</u>	<u>*Estimated</u> <u>av. yearly</u> <u>wages</u>
Manufacturing industries	60.2	\$24.73	40.4	\$1,285.96
Automobiles	81.7	31.48	38.8	1,636.96
Iron and Steel	67.1	28.71	42.3	1,492.92
Chemical and allied products	64.3	27.50	42.6	1,430.00
Shirts and their products	47.7	18.17	38.7	944.84
Woolen goods	37.3	13.61	36.4	707.72
Cotton goods	39.0	15.22	39.0	791.44
Carpets and rugs	58.0	23.29	40.1	1,211.08
Manufacturing industries				
Anthracite coal	79.4	22.66	28.3	1,178.32
Bituminous coal	79.7	24.65	31.4	1,281.80
Public utilities				
Telephone and telegraph	80.4	29.44	37.9	1,530.88
Electric light, power and mixed gas	81.6	32.90	40.5	1,710.80
Wholesale	67.2	28.68	42.6	1,491.36
Retail	52.7	21.31	43.8	1,108.12
Laundries (See Note)	37.7	16.20	42.9	842.40

*Based on 52 weeks work per year.

NOTE: The annual wages of women workers in laundries, where data on annual earnings of women could be obtained, ranged from \$267 in Charleston, S.C., to \$634 in Boston, Mass. In 13 of the 18 cities surveyed their annual earnings were less than \$500, according to a recent study by the Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor. The reader is also referred to Consider the Laundry Worker, a study of wages, hours and conditions of labor in power laundries in and around New York City, made by the League of Women Shoppers, Inc. 220 Fifth Avenue, New York City, price ten cents.

WAGES, HOURS AND WEEKLY EARNINGS IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY

September, 1937

	<u>Hours of</u> <u>work</u>	<u>Hourly rates</u> <u>in cents</u>	<u>Weekly</u> <u>earnings</u>
Ag	43.0	61.0	\$25.90
Grain	40.0	83.0	33.25
Canning and preserving	37.0	44.0	15.75
Confectionery	41.0	47.0	18.80
Dairy	45.5	59.0	27.15
Ice cream	46.5	60.0	27.85
Packing	41.0	69.0	28.35
Sugar	44.5	60.0	26.00
Refining, cane	36.0	69.0	24.95



four of the nine "Scottsboro Boys" been freed after six and a half years in prison.

The United States Supreme Court held unconstitutional an old Georgia insurrection act and thus freed Angelo Hernandez from a chain-gang sentence given for leading a group of unemployed strikers in Atlanta in 1931.

Colored school teachers in Maryland the same pay as white teachers.

Norman Holland of Cornell was named to the All-American football team in 1918, the first Negro to be named since Robeson won that honor in 1918.

William Hastie was appointed judge of the U.S. District Court in the Virgin Islands for a four year term at a salary of \$10,000 per year.

Twelve thousand sleeping car porters granted a pay increase of \$12 per year through the efforts of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

The Norfolk-Portsmouth (Va.) Methodist Ministers' Association in December voted unanimously to admit Negro Methodist ministers to membership.

When the exclusive William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh refused to admit Negro delegates to the People's Congress for Democracy and Peace in November 1937, nearly 50 white delegates who had already registered with the hotel. A crowd of 400 delegates, most of them white, picketed the hotel.

On December 18, 1937 the Missouri Supreme Court ordered that Negroes must be empaneled for jury service in all counties of the State.

In Arkansas a judge called a jury composed wholly of Negroes to try a case between two Negroes.

Miss Augusta Savage, director of the Harlem Community Art Center, has been commissioned by the New York World's Board to do a sculpture group showing the Negro's gift to American music.

Sixty-two white colleges in the South are giving courses on interracial relations; 49 others are giving segregated courses.

Undaunted by an adverse House vote of 188 to 209, the forces in support of the Ludlow Resolution have announced that the fight for its enactment will be continued and that it will be made an issue in the primary this fall. Speaking over the Columbia Broadcasting system on January 14th Representative Hamilton Fish of New York condemned Administration intervention which compelled 55 members of the House who signed the Discharge Petition to reverse themselves and vote to refuse consideration of the measure. Had these 55 stood firm the Resolution would have been subject to discussion and would have been within striking distance of the two-thirds majority necessary for its passage and submission to the States for ratification as an amendment to the Constitution. It is freely charged that save for the opposition of the President and the so-called Big Navy group the measure would have been approved by an overwhelming vote. The volume of spontaneous mail received by members of Congress urging support of the measure was enormous. This sentiment was supported by 70% favorable report by the Institute of Public Opinion poll.

Defeat of the Ludlow Resolution assumes tremendous importance in view of the efforts of the so-called 'Big Navy' bloc to stampede the country into the biggest peacetime armament program in our history. All of the familiar propaganda devices are being resorted to without even the effort to disguise the purpose. First, American newspapers publish dispatches that Italy is building warships of far greater tonnage than allowed by existing treaties. This sets Great Britain and France by the ears. Then Italy publishes dispatches saying that Japan is building battle-ships of 43,000 tons or larger. This sets the navy group in the United States by the ears. Then the United States, France and Great Britain formally demand that Japan disclose whether or not she is building such ships. This sets Japanese Jingoists by the ears. By the time the series of stories are proved to be nothing but myths the big military appropriations have been made and the purpose is accomplished. Senator Nye has publicly exposed the 'racket' but it still goes on. A new variation is the vulnerability of Hawaii, which is now having a popular run in the magazines.

